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ABSTRACT

As part of a national assessment of speech communication education in secondary schools, a 1979 survey was conducted in 336 Indiana schools. Typically, the basic speech course offered in Indiana high schools was an elective, one semester course covering a combination of topics, including public speaking, interpersonal communication, debate, discussion, and oral interpretation. The most popular textbooks were "Art of Speaking" and "Patterns of Communication." Teachers determined grades through a combination of written examinations and graded oral presentations. When other speech courses were offered, drama and advanced speech appeared more than twice as often as radio-television and debate. Theatre was the most popular extracurricular activity followed by forensics, debate, and discussion. Comparisons with earlier studies from 1969 indicated that the number of schools with speech programs was fairly constant, although more schools were requiring speech for graduation in 1979. The 1979 profile of Indiana high school speech teachers resembled the 1969 teacher profile in youth, major and minors, variety of teaching courses, and degree of professional affiliation. More of the 1979 teachers had masters degrees than the 1969 teachers. (RL)

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A Study of Speech-Communication Education in Indiana Secondary Schools

Alice Donaldson

Speech communication education in the secondary schools of Indiana is alive and well. A survey conducted in the spring of 1979 indicates that speech and speech related courses are a viable part of the curriculum in most schools. The survey was part of a national assessment of the status of speech communication education in secondary schools. Cassandra Book, Michigan State University, and Ed Pappas, Wayne State University, prepared the survey form, selected a random number of states, and contacted people to conduct the state surveys. They will collate the results from the states and prepare the national report.

In addition to indicating how Indiana compares with the rest of the nation, the survey provides an opportunity to see what is happening internally. Approximately ten years ago, Indiana secondary speech teachers were busy completing questionnaires for Coe Mackensie Strain of Indiana University, Bill Brooks of Purdue, and Don Hansell of Indiana State University. The results of these studies appeared in Indiana News and Notes.

Strain, "A Survey of Secondary School Speech Education in Indiana" (1966-67) February, 1968. Brooks, "A Study of the Speech Courses Offered for Credit in the Secondary Schools of Indiana" (1967-68) November, 1968. Hansell, "Survey: Speech in Indiana 1969-70," November, 1970.

Since the focal point of the studies varied with the purpose of the author, a direct question by question comparison is impossible. Despite this problem, relating of information from the several surveys provides some indication of trends in speech-communication education in Indiana.

Book and Pappas structured the 1979 questionnaire to learn about curriculum and teachers. They wanted information about the basic speech communication course, speech curricular and extra-curricular offerings,

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and the educational background and responsibilities of the teachers. Principals of all 411 secondary schools in Indiana received a cover letter explaining the study and a questionnaire; 336 (81.75%) responses were received. Two hundred eighty-one (83.6% of 336) indicated the existence of a speech communication program. Forty schools (13.7%) combine speech with English; 17 schools (5.8%) combine speech with theatre.

CURRICULUM

Are speech programs increasing?

The 66-67 study reported 19-1/2% of the schools offered no speech either through courses or activities. The 67-68 survey revealed 16.5% of the schools offered no speech courses for credit. In 69-70, the researcher asked if "speech programs of any nature" existed; only 8% said no. The 1979 questionnaire identified existence of speech programs by the number of responses to questions describing programs. Two hundred eighty-one schools, or 83.6% of those responding, described a program; thus 16.4% presumably have no program. This percentage is essentially the same as the 67-68 results. The 8% difference from the 69-70 study could lie in respondents' interpretation of the term "speech program." Many questions concerning theatre in the 69-70 survey could have led to an equating of theatre activities and speech programs. Both the 67-68 and '79 studies reveal about 40 schools combining speech and English. Information about the combination of speech with theatre appears only in the '79 study (17 schools). Lacking any specific information about the amount of time devoted to speech in the combination courses, one must conclude that any increase in speech programs is minimal or non-existant.

Is a speech course required for graduation?

The 67-68 study reported 5.3% of all high schools requiring a speech

course for graduation. By 69-70, the number was 28.7%; and in '79, 34.2% of the responding schools (115) required speech. Thus the 10 year trend is in the direction of more schools requiring a speech course for graduation.

What is the length of the basic course?

In 67-68, 273 schools (53.5%) indicated that speech was a one semester course; the number of schools offering Public Speaking each semester in 69-70 was 130. By '79, 196 schools (58.3%) used the semester pattern. The full year course seems to be waning--158 schools in 67-68, 90 schools in 69-70 and 40 schools in 1979. According to the '79 study, students can take the basic course either fall or spring semester. Of the responding schools, 43.4% (146) offer it every semester and 30.4% (102) offer it each year. Class periods range from 36 to 60 minutes with the mode 192 schools (69.1% of the respondents) meeting for 55 mintues.

When do students take the basic course?

The basic speech course appeared most frequently in the sophomore year in 69-70. This time period continues to be used. In the '79 study, 50 schools (14.9% of the respondents) offer the basic course in the sophomore year; however, hetrogenous groupings are popular. A total of 61.2% (206) report some form of grouping. The most frequent combination (113 schools or 33.6% of the respondents) permits students from grades 10, 11, and 12 to take the basic course together.

How many students take the basic course each year?

Hansell, in 69-70 estimated that 30,000 students took public speaking, 91 + per school offering speech. Although the '79 survey does not provide a direct comparison, it does contain two sets of related information, one dealing with numbers of students and the other with a

description of the basic course. The average number of students per section in '79 ranges from 5 through 35 with the mean number of students per section at 21.5. Of all the sections, 73.3% have 20 or more students. The number of class sections offered per school ranges from 1 to 21, and 146 (43.4% of the responding schools) offer the basic course each semester. One hundred two (30.4%) offer it each year and 33 (9.8%) follow some other plan. Attempted deployment of these figures indicates that the present number of students taking speech each year is less than the estimated 30,000 taking public speaking in Hansell's 69-70 report. An examination of course content in the '79 survey does indicate that public speaking remains the most important single activity. Table I displays descriptions of the content of the basic course and also notes which courses are required or elective.

Table I

Basic Course: Description and Requirement, 1979

Description	No. of Schools	% of Schools Responding	% of Courses Required	% of Courses Elective
Public Speaking	72	21.4	36.1	61.1
Interpersonal Com.	5	1.5	40.0	60.0
Activities (Debate, Discussion, oral Interpretation)	6	1.8	33.3	66.6
combination of the above	198	58.9	40.9	58.6
Other	6	1.8	--	--
Unk	49	14.6	--	--

The combination approach is both the most popular offering and the one most likely to be required. Since the survey did not ask for a breakdown of units and time alotments within the combination course, changes in public speaking emphasis cannot be ascertained with any specificity. One may assume, however, that most students taking speech receive public speaking training.

Are textbooks used for the basic course?

The earlier studies did not explore the use of textbooks, but the '79 study reveals use of 29 different books for the basic course. Table II lists the top 8.

Table II

Textbooks, 1979

Textbook	No Schools	% of 233 Naming a Text Schools Responding	% of the 336 Total Responses
Art of Speaking (Elson & Peck)	87	37.3	25.9
Patterns in Com (Hedde, Brigance, & Powell)	43	18.5	12.8
Person to Person (Galvin & Book)	15	6.4	4.4
Contemporary Speech (Hopkins)	14	6.0	4.2
Speaking by Doing (Buys)	12	5.2	3.6
Speaking of Com (Foresman & Beyer & Wilkinson & Lee)	11	4.7	3.3
38 Basic Speech Experiences (Carlite)	10	4.3	3.0
New American Speech (Hedde, Brigance, & Powell)	6	2.6	1.8

Although 233 schools (69.3% of the respondents) identify a textbook for the basic course, frequency of use varies. One hundred thirty-five (40.2%) indicate regular use; 121 (36.0%) describe the use as infrequent; and 21 (6.3%) say the text is never used. Of the books receiving regular classroom use Speaking by Doing and Patterns in Communication head the list, 66.6% and 60.5% use respectively. Teachers emphasizing a public speaking

approach chose the Art of Speaking (18 schools) and Patterns in Communication (11 schools). Teachers of the combination course used the Art of Speaking (62 schools) and Patterns in Communication (31 schools). A correlation of the year the teacher received the Bachelors degree with the use of textbook indicates that teachers graduating since 1965 prefer the Art of Speaking and Patterns in Communication.

How are students evaluated?

Information on this question is available only from the '79 survey. Apparently, today, the most popular method of evaluating the student's work is a combination of written examinations and oral presentations. Two hundred thirty-six schools (70.2% of the respondents) indicate this method. Only 44 schools (13.1%) rely exclusively on evaluations of oral performances for grade determination.

What is the most popular second course in speech communication and the most popular extra-curricular activity?

The 66-67 study revealed dramatics as the most frequently offered second course and also the most extensive activity outside the classroom. Brooks, in 67-68, asked for titles of other courses offered for credit. Speech II or Advanced Speech were the most frequently provided titles. Brooks added that the third course offering was debate or drama with only a slight difference separating the two. Only 9.8% of the schools offered 3 or more speech courses; of these 51 schools, 6 offered 5 or more courses. Hansell, in 69-70, said 167 schools offered courses other than public speaking--drama, 141; debate, 14; radio, 20; TV, 17; stagecraft, 28; interpretation, 10; and other (including advanced public speaking and a combination course), 25. In '79 there is a slight change in the ordering of the additional courses; 183 (62.6% of schools responding) name drama;

119 (40.7%) list advanced speech; and radio-TV is third with 58 schools (19.9%) offering this type of training; debate is in fourth place, only slightly behind radio-TV with 50 schools or 17.1%. Additional offerings are in oral interpretation, film, discussion, and interpersonal communication. In the 10 year period, drama has retained its popularity while courses in film and interpersonal communication appear to be new offerings at the secondary level.

Answers in '79 to the question about available extra-curricular activities reflect the pattern established in the listing of additional courses. Teachers in 236 schools (80.8% of the respondents) listed theatre; 115 schools (39.4%) have a forensics program; 69 (23.6%) have debate; and 52 (17.8%) have activities in discussion and student congress.

Summary

Typically the basic speech course offered in Indiana high schools in the spring of 1979 is an elective, one semester course covering a combination of topics--public speaking, interpersonal communication, debate, discussion, and oral interpretation. Schools offer the course in a 55 minute period, 5 days a week each semester to a hetrogenous grouping of approximately 21 students from grades 10, 11, and 12. Most teachers require a textbook and use it regularly. Descriptions of the basic course as public speaking or a combination of topics report fairly even choice among eight textbooks. Regardless of the year the teacher graduated from college, the Art of Speaking and Patterns of Communication are most often used. Teachers determine grades through a combination of written examinations and graded oral presentations. When offering other speech courses, schools tend to offer drama, advanced speech, radio-TV, and debate. Drama and advanced speech appear more than twice as often as the latter two. Theatre is the most popular extra-curricula activity followed by forensics, debate, and discussion.

Comparisons with earlier studies indicate the number of schools with speech programs is fairly constant although more schools are now requiring speech for graduation. The basic course continues to be offered for one semester. If it is limited to students in a single year, schools prefer the course to be offered to sophomores; however, most schools currently have a hetrogenous grouping of students from grades 10,11, and 12. Public speaking remains popular as the basic course, but the combination approach including public speaking is a more frequent offering today. When additional speech courses occur, theatre remains the most popular second course and the most popular activity.

TEACHER

Where have speech teachers received their education?

Strain reported in 66-67 that Indiana schools trained 78% of the Indiana secondary speech teachers. The '79 figures show 74.7% of the 289 respondents received undergraduate degrees from Indiana colleges and universities and 89.8% of the 256 respondents did graduate work in Indiana. In 69-70, Hansell found Indiana teachers from 52 colleges in 23 states. The leading out-of-state sources were Kentucky (7), Illinois (5), Ohio (5), Iowa (3), and Michigan (3). The picture is very much the same in '79. Undergraduate degrees come from 70 different schools in 19 states with the other states most frequently represented being Kentucky (11), Illinois (12), Michigan (9), and Ohio (7). Two hundred and fifty-six (72.9% of the total 351 responses) have graduate work from 33 schools in 12 states with out-of-state graduate attendance chiefly in Illinois (7), Michigan (2), and Ohio (2). Two hundred thirty (89.8% of the 256 responses) indicated attendance at Indiana institutions. Table III displays the Indiana schools named by the respondents in 69-70 and '79. The table contains only the schools 5 or

more respondents in 69-70 listed for an undergraduate degree or 5 or more respondents in the '79 survey named for graduate training.

Table III

Academic Preparation in Indiana Schools

	1969-70 Undergrad Degree	1969-70 Grad. Degree	1979 Undergrad Degree	1979 Grad Training*
Ball State	36	21	51	54
Butler	11	6	9	10
Evansville	10	4	4	5
Hanover	5	--	3	--
Hunnington	--	--	5	--
Ind. State U.	30	22	44	35
Indiana Univ.	46	37	49	68
IUPI	--	--	2	8
Manchester	14	1	14	--
Notre Dame	--	--	1	5
Oakland City	6	--	1	--
Purdue	13	6	20	26
St. Frances	--	--	1	8
Valpariso U.	--	--	1	8

*Numbers represent schools for masters in progress and masters complete.

Three universities--Indiana University, Ball State, and Indiana State--did the majority of training of Indiana speech teachers in 69-70 and are continuing to produce the greater numbers in 1979. Universities producing large numbers of undergraduates tend also to train the larger number of graduate students.

When did the teachers receive their education?

Fifty-four per cent of the responding teachers (156) have received their undergraduate degree in the last ten years. The median year of graduation is 1969. One hundred twenty-five, or 71.4% of the respondents, obtained a masters degree in the same period. The median year of graduation for the masters degree is 1973. In 66-67, Strain wrote that 50% of those actively teaching five years before her study were no longer in the field.

The 1979 figures reveal that 28.8% of the present teachers graduated from college in the last 5 years; thus one might assume 28.8% are no longer in the field. While this approximate rate of turn-over is much lower than the earlier figure, it is slightly less than the National Center for Educational Statistics' figure of an annual 6% rate of turn-over for all elementary and secondary teachers in the United States.

The 66-67 study reported more teachers earning masters degrees than in earlier years. Figures for comparison appear in the 69-70 study. Hansell reported 243 teachers, nearly 49%, had a masters degree. In 1979, 70.8% (190 of 268 responses) have a masters degree; of that number, 46, or 17.1% (of 268 responses), have done work beyond the masters degree; and an additional 78, or 29.1%, report a masters degree in progress. Apparently Indiana has an increasing quantity of higher educated secondary speech teachers. The pattern may be a reflection of the strengthing of requirement for professionalization of the license since 1946.

What are the majors and minors?

Strain reported 6 teachers in the field with no speech hours. In the years from 67-68 to '79, that number may have increased. According to the '79 survey, 68 or 23.5% of 289 respondents did not list speech or related areas such as theatre, communication, interpersonal communication, or mass communication as either their undergraduate major or minor. The number of teachers without speech or a related area listed as a major or minor in graduate programs is even higher, 107 or 39.4%. A specific examination of the graduate work by the 68 teachers not having an undergraduate major or minor in speech shows 48 continuing graduate work with no major or minor in speech despite their teaching responsibilities in speech. The 48 may have had speech courses in their programs, but they did not list speech as a major or minor.

The '79 survey shows 76.4% (221) of the respondents with undergraduate majors or minors in speech or a related area and 50.3% (135) of the responding teachers with graduate majors or minors in speech. Table IV displays a pattern of choice for undergraduate and graduate majors and minors. In the table, the term "speech" includes theatre, communication, interpersonal communication, and mass communication and the term "English" includes language arts.

Table IV

Majors and Minors Reported in 1979

Courses	Undergraduate		Graduate	
	No. of times listed as 1st. or 2nd. major	No. of times listed as 1st. or 2nd. minor	No. of times listed as 1st. or 2nd. major	No. of times listed as 1st. or 2nd minor
Speech	222	102	93	65
English	135	99	76	54
Other	52	121	106	37
No Minor	--	39	--	111

Although 76.3% (268) of Indiana teachers have continued work beyond a bachelors degree, the statistics show that speech appears less than 1/2 as often in graduate programs; majors in English are more likely to continue in English, and there is a decided increase in the frequency of subjects other than speech and English in graduate programs. Undergraduates having a single major number 167; double major, 122; single minor, 166; double minor, 84. Despite statistical preference for the single major and minor combinations, many teachers also believe in the importance of double majors and minors at the undergraduate level. As might be expected, there is less variety on the graduate level: 188 single majors,

54 double majors; 92 single minors, and 39 double minors; however, even on the graduate level double majors and minors are popular. Twenty-five distinct majors appeared on undergraduate programs as did 29 distinct minors. On graduate programs, 15 distinct majors and 10 distinct minors appeared. The subjects listed other than speech and English represent almost every subject taught in high schools--for example, science, math, music, art, health, and P.E. Education is more likely to be a major on the graduate level than any subject other than speech or English. The variety of subjects in majors and minors reflects the array of other courses taught by speech teachers. Asked to identify other courses taught, teachers listed 19 different subjects. Specific subjects appearing most often are English 217 (80.3%) of 270 respondents; theatre 66 (24.4%); radio-TV 13 (4.8%); journalism 14 (5.18%); and debate 8 (2.96%). The identification of English as the other subject most frequently taught agrees with the 69-70 report; however, the earlier listing of social studies as the second subject does not correspond since only four teachers in '79 listed teaching history and none listed social studies.

How much experience does the teacher have teaching speech or coaching activities?

Since 1969 is the median year for having obtained the undergraduate degree, years of experience will necessarily be short. Table V displays the years of experience teaching in 69-70 and '79 and the years of experience in coaching in '79. (Table V on following page.)

Table V

Teaching and Coaching Experience

1969-70		1979	
No. of years experience	No. of teachers	No. of teachers	No. of coaches
0-5	211	128	109
6-10	99	66	49
11-15	41	33	27
16-20	27	27	17
21-25	10	8	6
26-30	14	2	1
30	16	1	1

The comparative figures on teaching experience indicate that '79 teachers generally have less years of teaching experience than did those in 69-70; however, the percentages with less than 10 years of experience are almost identical. Numbers indicate that fewer teachers coach than teach, and teachers and coaches with more than fifteen years experience are in the minority.

What professional organizations do speech teachers join?

In the 67-68 report, Strain deplored the lack of support for professional organizations. She said almost 60% of the respondents did not belong to any professional speech group and most of the remaining 40% belonged only to National Thespians or the National Forensics League. Table VI displays organization membership consisting of 10 or more teachers as reported in 69-70 and '79. (Table VI on following page).

Table VI

Organization Membership

1969-70			1979	
Organizations	No. of Members	% or 518 Total Responses Received	No. of Members	% of 351 Total Responses Received
Ind. State Sp. Assoc.	87	16.7	100	28.4
Central States Sp. Assoc.	15	2.8	17	4.8
Sp. Assoc. of Am. (SCA)	47	9.0	18	5.1
NAEB	10	1.9	1	0.2
Am. Ed. Theatre Assoc.	19	3.6	--	--
Nat. Forensics League	--	--	23	6.5
Ind. H.S. Forensics League	--	--	18	5.1

In response to the question asking for identification of memberships in organizations other than Ind. State, Central States, and SCA, 1979 teachers named 34 different organizations. As might be expected from the list of classes taught, various professional English organizations appear on the total list although no one English organization has as many as 10 members among the respondents. The '79 study shows a total percentage membership of 47.7% of 282 respondents to the question for the first 3 organizations listed in Table VI. By including memberships in theatre, forensics, and broadcasting state and national organizations, the total is 62.7%, a figure quite similar to the one reported by Strain. Only 6 people had membership in the state, district, and national speech organizations.

Summary

The 1979 profile of a high school speech teacher in Indiana reveals a young teacher who graduated from college in the last 10 years from Ball State, I. U., or Indiana State and since that time probably has completed a masters degree program from one of the same institutions. The undergraduate major or minor may be in speech, but the graduate work is more likely to be in a different area. By taking double majors and minors,

the teacher is prepared to teach a variety of other courses. The teacher directs extra-curricular activities but has less years coaching than teaching. The teacher probably belongs to a professional organization, but not necessarily a speech organization. Should a speech organization be chosen, membership is most likely to be in the Indiana State Speech Association. Other memberships reflect the courses taught or activities directed.

In youth, major and minors, variety of teaching courses, and degree of professional speech organization membership, the '79 teacher resembles the counterpart of 10 years ago. The chief difference between the two lies in level of academic training. More of the '79 teachers who responded to the survey have the masters degree.

CONCLUSIONS

As speech professionals, we can be proud that speech has held its own and even made slight gains in the face of both phase electives and the back-to-basics movements. Perhaps the somewhat modest quality of change in curriculum and the higher educated teachers are responsible for our "satisfied customers."

The ten year comparison strikes a less positive note when we recognize that many of the problems identified by the earlier researchers are still problems today. In 66-67, Strain wrote, "Strong programs need strong teachers, and when a new teacher starts over every year or two, a strong program is impossible. Why do so many leave speech training? . . . Are speech teachers being promoted to administrative positions? Are they going into other fields? Or are they staying in teaching but getting out of speech?" The results of the '79 survey does not contain the answers and can well provoke the same questions. Both Strain and Hansell expressed concern about the lack of membership in professional speech organizations. The gains in

membership by ISA reported in '79 does not blunt the edge of this concern. If professional speech organization membership is important, students are either failing to learn about the organizations during their professional training, the organizations have not attempted to reach new teachers, or the teachers do not see organizational membership as beneficial. Strain believed the few uncertified people teaching speech were doing so because of lack of qualified persons, but 48 teachers without majors or minors in speech are teaching in the schools today. We need again to ask the question: Is it important that speech courses and activities be in the hands of people trained in speech? Prompted by the materials gathered in the 67-68 survey, Brooks noted that most Indiana high schools failed to meet the North Central Association's recommendation or the recommendation of SCA that one full year of speech be required for graduation from high school. The '79 study shows only 34.2% (115 respondents) of the schools requiring the basic course for graduation. Regardless of whether the requirement is for one semester or one year, most Indiana high schools still do not meet the North Central and SCA recommendation.

Although there appear to be few significant changes in the ten year picture, description of the present status of speech communication education is useful for clarification of present practices and as a stimulus for solving problems. The rapidity of change in teaching personnel makes frequent surveys necessary. Before 1989, the Indiana Speech Association should appoint a committee of university and high school teachers to prepare a new questionnaire dealing with descriptive information and hopefully gather answers to some of the questions raised in the studies covered in this report. The questionnaire should be repeated in later years to provide a picture of trends. Any resolution of persistent problems will come only if we have up-to-date information telling us what we are all about. We need an Indiana secondary speech education census.